

Signed and Interpreted Services:

St. Francis' Church
Barwick Way
Ingleby Barwick
Stockton
TS17 0WD

3rd Sunday in month
3 p.m.

St. Denys' Church
Walmgate
York

1st Sunday in month
10.30 a.m.

Hull and East Riding Deaf Institute
Spring Bank
Hull

Last Tuesday in month 3 p.m.

For further information about Ministry among Deaf People contact:

Rev. Linda Shipp
Whorlton Vicarage
18 Church Lane
Swainby
Northallerton
DL6 3EA

Tel: 01642 701777
Fax: 01642 706131
Email: revlmslipp@btinternet.com

Information also available from York Diocese Website:
www.dioceseofyork.org.uk—look under disability access



Church among Deaf People

York Diocese

Is your Church Deaf-Friendly? How to welcome Deaf People

There are regular monthly services of Holy Communion in sign language in York Diocese—see details on back page.

The biggest difficulty most deaf people face is access to services such as **funerals, weddings or baptisms.**

For **information and help** about **signers** for these services please contact:

Rev. Linda Shipp
Chaplain Among Deaf People

Tel: 01642 701777
Fax: 01642 706131
Email: revlmslipp@btinternet.com



Information available from York Diocese Website:
www.dioceseofyork.org.uk under disability access

Church among Deaf People

Rev. Linda Shipp
Whorlton Vicarage
18 Church Lane
Swainby
Northallerton
DL6 3EA

What is Deafness?

The term ‘deafness’ refers to a wide range of hearing loss. Deaf people are not ill but deafness can effect the person’s ability to communicate, therefore some deaf people need support, the support varies according to the degree of deafness.

Deaf

People who have been deaf from birth or early childhood and may never have heard sound. They may communicate by:

British Sign Language (BSL) Sign Supported English (SSE) or by Lip Reading.

Partially Deaf

Partially deaf people may be able to communicate with hearing people, but often find it difficult. They may use hearing aids, their ability to hear and understand conversation varies with the individual. Some may have speech difficulties and may also use sign language.

Deafened

May have lost their hearing through illness, accident, or through age. They may have normal speech and education. They may communicate through speech and lip reading.

Hard of Hearing.

Often caused gradually through the ageing process. Some may find it difficult to come to terms with, and may be reluctant to wear a hearing aid, or mix with other deaf people.

Is your Church Deaf-Friendly?

Be aware—some possible problems.

People may feel self consciousness, have a limited ability to communicate, may be worried they won’t understand, may have a fear of being misunderstood, or fear being left out.

How to overcome some difficulties.

Smile when meeting deaf people, don’t shout. A gentle touch on the arm shows you want to say something. Eye contact is important. Speak clearly, and not too slowly, without over emphasising. If you don’t understand the first time ask the person to repeat it. Use pen and paper if necessary. Be patient. Don’t put your hands in front of your mouth when speaking.

Help for Deaf People in Church and Signers.

Lighting and seating

Deaf people need to be able to see what is happening and have clear sight of speakers and the signer. Good lighting is essential, make sure it is on the signer’s face, not behind, or it could dazzle the Deaf person. Windows and lights can cause their vision to blur when they are focused on the signer.

Experiment with seating before the service starts—ask the Deaf person where they prefer to sit. If there are a large number of Deaf people present they may stay seated throughout the service so that they have a clear view of the signer.

Use the **loop system** if you have one, make sure it works properly.

Visual aids are helpful to Deaf People, if possible use an overhead projector with the hymns/songs on so that Deaf people are free to use their hands to sign. Use large print where possible.

Interpreters/signers will need the following: Hymn words in large print. Words to any choir or solo items in large print. Service Liturgy in large print. Words of prayers or intercessions. Bible readings. It is helpful if the interpreter can see a copy of the sermon beforehand so that they can sign it accurately and clearly. The signer will need to be slightly raised so that he/she is visible.

Language: When referring to members of the Deaf community, words such as “Deaf people”, “Deaf Community”, and “Deaf Church” are acceptable. “Deaf and Dumb” is considered unacceptable, many would be hurt or offended. “Deaf People” is preferable to “The Deaf”. The language of Deaf People is “Sign Language” not “Deaf Language”.

Try and communicate where you can, be friendly, and if you have Deaf visitors regularly then think about learning basic sign language at evening classes. Contact your Local Education Authority to find out where classes are held.